**At Home Order of Service**

**Sunday 28th of August 2022**

**This Sunday’s theme**

“Finding a place for all”

## Welcome

In our worship today on this 11th Sunday after Trinity let us remember that the love of God for his people and for his church knows no limits. The Psalmist talks of God’s love reaching up to the heavens and his justice to the depth of the ocean, and yet he blesses us as individuals with the gifts of his Spirit so that his Church, his people might be a light in this place, to his glory.

[To God Be The Glory ( Royal Albert Hall, London) - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-15v9iworAU)

**To God be the glory, great things He hath done**,

So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,

Who yielded His life an atonement for sin,

And opened the life gate that all may go in.

**Refrain**: Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the earth hear His voice!

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the people rejoice!

Oh, come to the Father, through Jesus the Son,

And give Him the glory, great things He hath done.

Oh, perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,

To every believer the promise of God;

The vilest offender who truly believes,

That moment from Jesus a pardon receives.

Great things He hath taught us, great things He hath done,

And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;

But purer, and higher, and greater will be

Our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see.

Father God, we bring our offering of worship and with it the service of our lives through this coming week. May we go from this place knowing that we have met with you and been blessed by your Spirit, to live and work to your glory. **Amen**

Living God whose Word became flesh in Jesus and whose Spirit of Truth speaks into our hearts all honour and glory and worship belong to you. As our praises pronounce your wonder may our lives overflow with love, that our words and deeds might tell of your goodness and declare your infinite grace. **Amen**.

**Confession**

Gracious God with gratitude and gladness we hear your promise of liberation: that in Christ we are forgiven and set free, and restored to serve you. Thanks be to you, Living God! **Amen.**

**Collect,**

God of Glory, the end of our searching, help us to lay aside all that prevents us from seeking your kingdom, and to give all that we have to gain the pearl beyond all price, through our Saviour Christ**. Amen.**

**The Reading:**

**Luke 14.1,7-14 NIV**

**14**One Sabbath, when Jesus went to eat in the house of a prominent Pharisee, he was being carefully watched.

**7**When he noticed how the guests picked the places of honor at the table, he told them this parable: **8**“When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for a person more distinguished than you may have been invited. **9**If so, the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, ‘Give this person your seat.’ Then, humiliated, you will have to take the least important place. **10**But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, ‘Friend, move up to a better place.’ Then you will be honored in the presence of all the other guests. **11**For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

**12**Then Jesus said to his host, “When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. **13**But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, **14**and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

**Thought of the week from Roots**:

One of the fascinating aspects of experiencing different cultures around the world is the way each one ‘does’ hospitality. Many Eastern cultures have fascinating traditions that might seem unintuitive to Westerners, often based around dining habits. For instance, in China, finishing a bowl of food you have been given is taken as a signal that your host hasn’t provided enough, and they will feel compelled to refill your bowl until you are, apparently, satisfied. Ethiopia has a tradition called ‘gursha’, which involves taking an, often large, morsel of food, wrapping it in injera – a type of flatbread – and placing it in the mouth of a dining companion. Sharing food in this way is seen as a sign of honour and a way to build social trust. In Japan, guests are very important and the tradition of hospitality also has a name, ‘omotenashi’. It means having complete dedication to the guest, the desire to entertain with all your heart. It can be experienced almost everywhere, not only at home, and is expressed in various ways including, for example, bows, warm welcomes and various gestures of kindness.

In Britain, in days gone by, there were very strict rules of etiquette governing hospitality. The Victorians wrote many books on the subject. Did you know, for example, that when hosting a dinner party, the hostess would inform the gentlemen as to which lady they were to accompany into the dining room. And, rather like those in this week’s Gospel story, the order in which people were seated was an indication of their rank and importance. Even what you were to say to your dining companion was carefully directed by the etiquette manuals.

And, however strange some of them may seem, there is no doubt that these rules, conventions and traditions help societies navigate social interaction and help people behave in ways that are polite and acceptable.

So, what must the host have thought when Jesus started quizzing the conventions of his day and telling stories that questioned the social norms? First, Jesus says don’t jostle for the best, highest, position at the table. You might be disappointed. Instead, take the lowest place and see what happens – you might be pleasantly surprised. Of course, he is not attempting to teach table manners. He is asking people to live with humility, and this in a society where humility was very rarely considered a virtue. Yet, humility is a mark of being a follower of Jesus.

Then he goes on to question the whole dinner party system. It still happens today: you invite us, so we have to invite you – all vying to put on the best show. Jesus says, invite those who really can’t give anything in return. That’s true hospitality and generosity. It’s also counter-cultural; but it speaks the message of full inclusion. Everyone is invited. And, to really rub it in, those who would usually be excluded are to be given priority, he says. Inclusion is also a mark of being a follower of Jesus.

**Intercessions** We pray…

for those living on the edge, in fear of the future:  
bless them with a deepening sense of hope and trust in you;

for those caught up in the ways of the world,  
relying on worldly treasures:  
give them a blessing of release and joy in you;

for those battling with ill health:  
give them the blessing of strengthening hope and healing;

for all who have the responsibility of leading your flock:  
give them your blessing of wisdom and strength.

Lord, you watch and protect.  
Strengthen all who are in need  
with an unshakeable trust in you;  
give them a glimpse of the treasures  
that are theirs when they put their hope in you.  
**Amen.**

**Lord’s Prayer**

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever.  
Amen** .

[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rsXvcIC\_zb0**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rsXvcIC_zb0)

**God sent His son** they called Him Jesus  
He came to love heal and forgive  
He lived and died to buy my pardon  
An empty grave is there to prove my Saviour lives

Because He lives I can face tomorrow  
Because He lives all fear is gone  
Because I know He holds the future  
And life is worth the living just because He lives

How sweet to hold a new born baby  
And feel the pride and joy he brings  
But greater still the calm assurance  
This child can face uncertain days because He lives

Because He lives

And then one day I'll cross that river  
I'll fight life's final war with pain  
And then as death gives way to victory  
I'll see the lights of glory and I'll know He lives

Because He lives

Lord, go with us.  
Help us to seek your treasure.  
Help us to look for all you’re doing right now.  
Help us – by our example as much as by our words –  
to share your treasure and your life-giving story  
with the people we meet this week.  
**Amen.**

Generous God, you have nourished us with your word. Take us, bless us and send us, that our lips be touched with the gentleness of your peace; that our hearts burn with your passion and integrity; that our lives declare the good news of your love for the whole creation, in the name of Christ, **Amen**

Faithful God whose Word does not return empty but accomplishes all that you purpose, may your blessings fall like rain to water the earth, nourishing seed for our food, and filling us with the abundance of your love, through Jesus Christ your living Word. **Amen.**